

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STOCKH 02685 230900Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 MCT-01 COME-00 FAA-00 CAB-02 SY-05 USSS-00
IO-13 EB-07 DOTE-00 /086 W
-----054436 231220Z /40

R 221423Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0922
INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY HELSINKI
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

C O N F I D E N T I A L STOCKHOLM 2685

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, SW, UR
SUBJECT: SOVIETS PRESS FOR EXTRADITION OF PLANE HIJACKER

REF: STOCKHOLM 2493

1. DURING LUNCH ON JUNE 20 WITH POLCOUNS, MFA POLITICAL
DIVISION DIRECTOR AMBASSADOR KNUT THYBERG SAID SOVIETS
HAD BY NO MEANS GIVEN UP EFFORTS TO PERSUADE GOS TO
EXTRADITE VASILJ SOSNOVSKIJ. LATTER HAD FORCED SOVIET
PLANE ON DOMESTIC FLIGHT TO DIVERT FROM RIGA TO STOCKHOLM
ON MAY 26 AND REQUESTED POLITICAL ASYLUM WHEN SURRENDERING
TO SWEDISH POLICE. GOS SUBSEQUENTLY ANNOUNCED SOSNOVSKIJ
WOULD NOT BE EXTRADITED TO SOVIET UNION, AS SOVIETS WERE
DEMANDING, BUT TRIED HERE.

2. THYBERG REFERRED TO THE ARREST BY SOVIET AUTHORITIES
ON JUNE 5 AT BREST OF TWO SWEDISH TOURISTS, BENGT-
GUNNAR SARELD AND NILS ERIK ENGSTROM, BOTH CONNECTED
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WITH THE SWEDISH PENTECOSTAL CHURCH. ACCORDING TO
THYBERG, THESE "POOR RELIGIOUS CREATURES" HAD ATTEMPTED
TO SMUGGLE OUT RUSSIAN-LANGUAGE LITERATURE DESCRIBING
RESTRICTIONS ON RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN THE USSR AND NOW
FACE SENTENCES OF SEVEN OR MORE YEARS IF FOUND GUILTY,
AS EXPECTED, BY SOVIET COURTS. THYBERG SAID THE MFA
HAS NOW RECEIVED "FEELERS" FROM THE SOVIETS INDICATING

A "DEAL" COULD BE ARRANGED TO EXCHANGE THE HIJACKER FOR THE TWO SWEDES. HE ADDED THAT THE GOS WOULD NOT CONSIDER THE SWAP FOR ONE MOMENT.

3. THYBERG SAID SOVIETS ARE NOT AT ALL IMPRESSED WITH OPTION AVAILABLE TO GOS UNDER HAGUE CONVENTION NOT TO EXTRADITE PLANE HIJACKERS TO COUNTRY OF ORIGIN. SOVIETS HAVE MADE CLEAR THEY INTERPRET GOS DECISION AS POLITICAL, NOT LEGAL, AND AN "UNFRIENDLY ACT". THYBERG SAID BASIS OF SOVIET CONCERN IS THAT THE STORY OF SOSNOVSKIJ'S "SUCCESS" WILL SPREAD AND TEMPT OTHERS TO ATTEMPT SIMILAR ACTS.

4. IN ADDITION TO REPEATED SOVIET EMBASSY REPRESENTATIONS, SOVIET PIQUE WAS REFLECTED IN A STRONG TASS DENUNCIATION ON JUNE 11 OF THE SWEDISH DECISION TO KEEP SOSNOVSKIJ, THIS "HARD-BOILED CRIMINAL." THYBERG SAID THE SCHEDULED ONE-WEEK VISIT TO STOCKHOLM OF HIS COUNTERPART IN THE SOVIET FOREIGN MINISTRY, SOBALEV, WHICH WAS DUE TO BEGIN JUNE 20, HAD BEEN SUDDENLY CANCELLED ONLY ON JUNE 19. THYBERG SAID SIMILAR SOVIET "GAMES" WERE NOT BEING RULED OUT BY MFA.

5. THYBERG SAID A SWEDISH EMBASSY OFFICER IN MOSCOW WOULD VISIT SARELD AND ENGSTROM IN JAIL IN BREST ON JUNE 27 AND WOULD RECOUNT TO THEM INSTANCES IN THE PAST WHERE

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SOVIETS HAD DEPORTED FOREIGN RELIGIOUS TYPES ACCUSED OF SMUGGLING AFTER FULL PUBLIC CONFESSIONS OF THEIR CRIME. HE CONCLUDED THAT MFA WAS NOT ADVISING THE TWO TO ACKNOWLEDGE ANY GUILT BUT FELT THEY SHOULD HAVE SUCH INFORMATION BEFORE REACHING THEIR OWN DECISIONS.

PERRY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 22-Jun-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977STOCKH02685
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
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